The Bloomfield Times.

FRANK MORTIMER, Editor and Proprietor. | AN INDEPENDENT FAMILY NEWSPAPER. | Terms: IN ADVANCE. One Dollar per Year.

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The Bloomfield Times.

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BY

FRANK MORTIMER.

SUBSCRIPTION TERMS.

ONE DOLLAR PER YEAR!

IN ADVANCE.

Courting by Letter.

"SHE is really the prettiest little creature I ever saw," said Mr. Willoughby Vane, as he turned from the window for the fiftieth time that morning. "Jane," he added, addressing his housemaid, who was clearing away the breakfast things, have you any idea who the people are who have taken old Mr. Adderly's house opposite?"

"Well, yes, sir, if you please," returned the housemaid. "I met their cook at the grocer's the other day, and she said that her master's name was Black—Capting Choker Black—and that he was staying there on leave of absence with his wife and daughter, sir."

"Oh, indeed! Did she happen to mention the young lady's name?"

"Yes, sir. She called her Miss Eva."

"Eva! What a charming name!" murmured Willoughby to himself; and then he added aloud:

"That will do, Jane thank you."

Mr. Willoughby Vane was a bachelor twenty-eight years old, rich indolent and tolerably good-looking. He lived with a widowed mother in a pleasant house on the Clapham road, and, having nothing else to do, had fallen desperately in love with his pretty neighbor, and anxiously sought an opportunity for an introduction. However having discovered the name of his fair enchantress, he determined to address her anonymously by letter.

Having decided upon taking this step, the next thing to be done was to put it into execution; and, having shut himself up in his little study, after many futile attempts he succeeded in framing an epistle to the lady to his satisfaction; begging her, if she valued his peace of mind, to return an answer to "W. V., The Postoffice, Clapham-common." That done, he went out for a walk, and dropped the letter into the nearest box.

Regularly three times a day, for a week afterward, he called at the postoffice to see whether an answer had arrived for him. As the week advanced, Willoughby began to lose his appetite, and grew so restless and irritable, that Mrs. Vane, like a fond mother, fancied that her dear boy was unwell, and begged him to consult their medical attendant. But her son laughed at the idea, knowing well that his complaint was beyond the doctors skill to cure.

He was beginning to despair of ever receiving a reply, when to his great delight on the seventh morning, a letter was handed to him by the post-mistress, written in a dainty female hand, and addressed to "W. V." Almost unable to conceal his emotion, he quitted the shop, broke open the seal, and drank in the contents.

They were evidently of a pleasing nature for he read the letter over again, kissed the envelope, put it in his breast-coat pocket and hurried home to see his inamorata looking out of the window of the opposite home, as usual.

For a moment his first impulse was to salute her respectfully; but immediately afterward he bethought himself that as he was still *incog.*, the young lady would perhaps, feel insulted by the action. Besides how could she have any idea that he was "W. V.?" So he went indoors, and amused himself for three hours in inditing a reply to her letter, which he posted the same afternoon, and, in due course, a second answer arrived.

And so matters went on, a constant interchange of letters being kept up for a fortnight, during which time Mr. Willoughby Vane spent his days in running to and from the postoffice, writing and watching his fair neighbor from the window of the dining-room.

"Confound it!" he would sometimes say to himself. "How very provoking the dear girl is! She will never look this way. I do wish I could catch her eye, if only for a moment. What a horridly sour-looking old crab the mother is! Depend upon it Willoughby, that poor child is anything but happy at home with those two old fogies. Indeed her letters hint as much. And having given vent to his feelings, he would put on his hat and walk to the postoffice or shut himself in his room, and compose another note to his "Dearest Eva."

At length, three months having flown rapidly away in this manner, he received a letter one morning from the young lady which ran as follows:

"To W. V.—Sir: As it is useless to continue a correspondence in this manner, I think it is now time for you to throw off your *incognito*, and reveal your true name and position to one to whom you are not totally indifferent. Believe me that nothing inspires love like mutual confidence. Prove to me that I have not been imprudent in answering your letters by at once informing me who you are. It is with no feeling of idle curiosty I ask this, simply for our mutual satisfaction.

"Yours, &c., EVA."

To which Willoughby replied by return of post:

"DEAREST EVA: If you will permit me to call you so! Have you not for weeks past observed a young man with his hair brushed back, anxiously watching you. from the window of the opposite house? And, although you have not apparently taken the slightest notice of him, I trust that his features are not altogether repulsive to you. I am that individual.

Charmed by the graceful magic of thine eye,
Day after day I watch and dream; and sigh;
Watch thee, dream of thee. sigh for thee alone,
Fair star of Clapham—may I add, my own?

To quote with some alterations, the noble stanza of the poet Brown. And now I have a favor. Whenever you see me at the window, take no notice of me at present, lest my mother should observe it. In a few days she will be going out of town, and then we can throw off all restraint. Till then, adieu! Adieu, my adorable one, adieu! My eyes are ever on you. Your own "WILLOUGHBY VANE."

To which epistle come the following answer:

"DEAR SIR: Your explanation is perfectly satisfactory, I may also add that your features are not at all repulsive to

EVA."

"Bless her! What a delightful little girl she is!" ejaculated Willoughby.

And he went out, ordered a new suit of clothes, and had his hair out.

"Willy," said Mrs. Vane to her son the next morning; "I do wish you would do something to improve your mind, and not waste your time by looking out of the window all day as you have lately done. Come and read the parlimentary debates to me, if you have nothing else to do."

The worthy lady was a red hot politician, and for three mortal hours she kept him at this delightful task; at the expiration of which time he succeeded in escaping to his own room, where he wrote the following note to Eva:

"DEAREST EVA: I am overjoyed at the contents of your brief communication. If, as you say, my features are not altogether repulsive to you, may I hope that you will consent to be mine—mine only?

WILLOUGHBY."

Back came the reply next morning:

"DEAR WILLOUGHBY: Your reply has made me feel very happy. It is very dull here; no society except father and mother. I long for more congenial companionship. Thine, EVA."

In this delightful manner the days flew on—halcyon days, too, they were for Willoughby, and sweetened by the interchange of this, and other lover-like correspondence. On the following Monday morning Mrs. Vane left town on a visit to some friends in Devonshire, leaving her son to keep house at home. That same afternoon one of Capt. Black's servants brought the following note for Willoughby:

"WILLIE: Have you any objections to my telling my dear father all? Matters have gone so far that it will be impossible for either of us to retract what we have written. Let us take papa into our confidence. I know his kind and generous nature well, and have no fear that he will oppose our union. Pray, send me a line by bearer. EVA."

The answer was as follows:

"MY OWN EVA: Do whatever you consider best, My fate is in your hands. If your papa should refuse his consent, I—But I will not think of anything so dreadful. Fear not that I shall ever retract.—Life without you would be a desert with no oasis to brighten it.

Yours until death, WILLOUGHBY."

That evening, just as Willoughby had finished dinner, he heard a loud double-knock at the street-door; and on its being opened a strange voice inquired, in a loud tone:

"Is Mr. Willoughby Vane at home?"

His heart beat violently as Jane, entering the room, said:

"A gentleman wishes to speak to you in the library, sir."

And she handed him a card, inscribed "Capt. Choker Black, C. B., H. M.'s 1, 794th foot."

"I will be with him in a moment," said Willoughby; and he swallowed a couple glasses of sherry, to nerve him for the interview.

"Capt. Choker Black, I believe," he said, as he entered the library.

"Your servant, sir," said the gallant captain, who, glass in hand, was busily engaged in scrutinizing an engraving of the battle of Navarino.

"Your servant, sir. Have I the pleasure of addressing Mr. Willoughby Vane?"

Willoughby bowed.

"Then, sir," of course, you know the business that has brought me here?"

Terribly nervous, and scarcely knowing what answer to make, our hero bowed again.

"Come, come, sir, don't be afraid to speak out! My daughter has made me her confidant, so let there be no reserve between us. Eva has told me all!"

Here poor Willoughboy blushed up to the roots of his hair.

"You see I know all about it; you have fallen desperately in love with the poor girl; and although you have never exchanged two words together, you are already engaged to be married. Very expeditious, upon my word! Ha! ha! ha!—Pray excuse me for laughing, but the idea is somewhat comical."

As the captain appeared to be in a very good humor, Willoughby's courage began to rise.

"Don't mention it, sir. You are her father, and have a right to do what you please. But I sincerely trust that you have no objection to the offer?"

"I? None! Believe me, I shall be delighted to see my Eva comfortably settled. But hark ye, sir, business is business. I am a plain, blunt man, and fifty years' sojourn with one's regiment in India doesn't help to polish one. First of all, then, what are your prospects?"

And the captain drew a note book from his pocket, and proceeded to examine our hero as if he was in a court of justice.

"You are an only son, I believe?"

"I am."

"Good." And down went the note in the pocket-book.

"Your age?"

"Twenty-eight next birthday."

"Twenty-eight. Good. Is your constitution healthy?"

"I believe so. I have had the measles, whooping-cough, and mumps."

"Disorders peculiar to infancy. Good." And the captain scribbled away again.

"Are you engaged in any business or profession?"

"None."

"Then how on earth do you live?"

"On my private income, captain."

"Then all I can say is, you're an uncommonly lucky fellow to be able to subsist on that. I only wish I could. What is the amount of your income?"

"About seven hundrad a year."

"Is it in house property, shares in limited companies, or the funds? If in public companies I should be sorry to give two years' purchase for the lot."

"In the new 4 per cents."

"Good. I think I may say very good.—What sort of a temper are you?"

"Well, that's a rather difficult question to answer," said Willoughby, smiling for the first time.

"Hang it, sir, not at all!" returned the captain. "If any one asked me my temper. I should say 'Hasty, sir—confoundly hasty!' And Choker Black's proud of it, sir—proud of it!"

"Say about the average," answered Willoughby, timidly.

"Temper average," answered Willoughby, timidly.

"Temper average," said the Captain, jotting it down. "I think these are about all the questions I have to ask you. You know my daughter by sight?"

"I have had the pleasure of seeing her frequently, from the window, sir."

"And you think you would be happy with her?"

"Think, captain. I am certain of it."

"Very good. Now harkey, Mr. Willoughby Vane. Marry her, treat her well, and be happy. Neglect her, blight her young affections by harshness or cruelty, and hang me, sir, if I don't riddle you with bullets. Gad! sir, I'm a man of my word, and I'll do what I say, as sure as my name is Choker Black."

"I have no fear on that score, captain. Unite her to me, and if a life of devotion—"

"I know all about that," said the captain. "Keep your fine phrases for the girl's ears. Give me your hand, sir. I've taken a fancy to you."

"You flatter me, captain."

"Hang it, sir, no; Choker Black never indulges in flattery. Don't be afraid to grasp my hand, sir; it's yours so long as I find you plain-sailing and straightforward. But if ever I suspect you of any artifice or deception, I'll knock you down with it.—So now I hope we perfectly understand each other."

"One word more," said Willoughby.—"Am I to understand that you consent to our union."

"Certainly. You can be married tomorrow, if you please. Sir, the happiness of my dear child is my first consideration. Gad, sir, I am not a brute, not one of those unnatural parents people read of in novels. Choker Black may be a fire-eater in the field; but at any rate he knows how to treat his own flesh and blood."

"Captain, you overwhelm me with gratitude."

"Say no more about it. Clap on your hat and come across the road with me, and I'll introduce you to my daughter at once."

Scarcely knowing what he was about, Willoughby did as he was told. They crossed the road together, and the captain opened his door with a latch-key.

"One moment, if yon please," said Willoughby, who was titivating his hair and arranging his cravat.

"Are you ready now?" asked the captain.

"Quite."

"Mr. Willoughby Vane," cried the captain, ushering our hero into the drawing-room. Then, waving his hand, he added, "Allow me to introduce you to my wife and daughter."

Willoughby looked exceedingly foolish as he bowed to the two ladies. On a couch by the fireside sat his enchantress, looking more bewitching than ever; her *vis-a-vis* being the tall, thin, angular woman in black that he had frequently noticed from over the way.

"What a contrast,' thought Willoughby, "between mother and daughter."

"Annie, my dear, Mr. Vane is nervous, no doubt. You know the adage. Let us leave the young people together; and he'll soon find his tongue then, I'll wager," the captain said, addressing the younger of the two ladies, who immediately rose from her seat.

"Stay, for—there is some mistake here," said Willoughby. "This lady is—" and he pointed to the gaunt female.

"My daughter, sir!" said the captain. "My daughter by my first wife."

"And this—" ejaculated our hero, turning to the young lady.

"Is my second wife, sir."

Mr. Willoughby Vane fled from his home that night. About a month later his almost broken-hearted mother received a letter from him explaining the whole affair; and the post-mark bore the words of Montreal, Canada.

Revolutionary Anecdote.

AN old lady used to relate the following anecdote of her Revolutionary remembrance:

The afternoon of one of the last days of 1776 when I was a few months short of 8 years old, notice came to Townsend, Massachusetts, where my father used to live, that fifteen soldiers were wanted.

The training band was instantly called out, and my brother that was the next older than I, was one that was selected. He did not return till late at night, when all were in bed. When I rose in the morning I found my mother in tears, who informed me that my brother John was to march next day after to-morrow morning at sunrise. My father was at Boston, in the Massachusetts Assembly. Mother said that though John was supplied with summer clothes, he must be absent seven or eight months, and would suffer from want of winter garments. There were at this time no stores, and no articles to be had except such as each family could make itself. The sight of my mother's tears always brought all the hidden strength of the body and mind to action. I immediately asked what garments were needful. She replied "pantaloons."

"Oh, is that is all we will spin and weave him a pair before he goes."

"Tut," said my mother, "the wool is on the sheep's back, and the sheep are in pasture."

I immediately turned to a younger brother and bade him take a salt-dish and call them to the yard.

Mother replied, "Poor child, there are no sheep-shears within three miles."

"I have some small shears at the loom."

"But we can't spin and weave it in so short a time."

"I am certain we can, mother."

"How can you weave it? There is a long web of linen in the loom."

"No matter, I can find an empty loom." By this time the sound of the sheep made me quicken my steps toward the yard. I requested my sister to bring me the wheel and cards while I went for the wool. I went into the yard with my brother and secured a white sheep, from which I sheared, enough for a web; we then let her go with the rest of her fleece. I sent the wool in by my sister. Luther ran for a black sheep, and held her while I cut off wool for my filling and half the warp, and then we allowed her to go with the remaining part of her fleece.

The good old lady further observed that the wool thus obtained was duly carded and spun, washed, sized, and dried; a loom was found a few doors off, the web got in, wove, and prepared, cut and made two or three hours before the brother's departure—that is to say, in forty hours from the commencement, without help from any modern improvement.

The good old lady closed by saying, "I felt no weariness, I wept not, I was serving my country, I was relieving mother. I was preparing a garment for my darling brother.

The garment being finished, I retired and wept till my overcharged and bursting heart was relieved."

This brother was, perhaps, one of General Stark's soldiers, and with such a spirit to cope with, need we wonder that Burgoyne did not execute his threat of marching into the heart of America?